SOPHIA ELIZABETH MOULTON HICKEN

On October 3rd, 1853, in historic old England, Irchester, Northamptonshire, a little girl with blue eyes and dark hair was born, sixth child of Thomas and Sarah Denton Moulton. Her name was Sophia Elizabeth and she was lovingly called "Lizzie" by her family and friends.

Her family had a nice comfortable house, a fireplace and always enough food to eat and clothing to wear. The L.D.S. Elders in England at that time found the Moultons going quietly and faithfully about their respective duties. They were filled with joy and earnest desire to live each day worthy of the blessings of the Lord, of whom they knew so very little. The message of the restored gospel brought peace and happiness to their home.

On December 29, 1841, they became members of the Latter Day Saints Church and began looking forward to the day when they could join the Saints in the land of Zion.

The following history was written by Elizabeth Moulton Hicken in a letter to a grand-daughter, Verda Hicken:

> The Moultons joined a company under the leadership of Captain Willie of the handcart company. They must travel light, and it was no easy task to decide what to take and what should be left behind. We boarded a sailing vessel bound for America the 3d of May, 1856. The exact date I do not remember, but my mother gave birth to a baby boy while crossing the English Channel on the 5th of May. To me it was a great undertaking, and with a family of seven besides the new baby, Mother was promised by a servant of the Lord that if she would go, she should reach Zion without losing one of her family. She did and the promise was fulfilled. Father was rather lothe to start with Mother in that condition. Before leaving England two sisters had smallpox. One of them died. The other one lived. She had marks on her wrist, so Mother made her a pair of gloves to wear. They knew the ship officers would not allow her to go if they saw her hand. Father prayed earnestly that they would not remove the left glove. They just took the right one off, so they were all on the vessel and happy, little realizing how far and what hard work was ahead of them.
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> We were six weeks on the sea in a sailing vessel when we landed in New York Harbor, June 14th, 1856. We went to Winter Quarters, from there to Iowa (sic - should be reversed). Here we were delayed something like three weeks because the many handcarts that were being made were not finished. They were made of green material. They had two handcarts with all their possessions loaded, still had a large trunk with a lot of valuable clothing in it, and also a fine feather bed. They were given the promise that these articles would be sent by team, but the Moulton's never saw them again. It was July 16th when we were out a few miles from Iowa, the wheels began to get loose first in one

place, then in another and that delayed the company so much that it threw us into the winter before we reached the Great Salt Lake Valley.

Day after day they would try to lighten their loads by going through their meager possessions. They would discard everything that could be spared to lighten the load. Father one day threw away the lid to the teapot, but Mother picked it up. When they became snowbound, it is impossible to imagine the intense suffering of the little group, 'The belated Handcart Company of hundreds under Captain Willie.' As the days wore into months, food became scarse and there was barely enough to keep them alive--never enough to keep them from being intensely hungry. One sister remembers seeing the men scrape the hair from beef hides and cut it into strips and roast it over a wood fire. She remembers how good it tasted to the starving company. My sister Lottie, myself and the new baby rode on the handcart and mother pulled. Lottie would ride down the hills. The child wondered at this and remarked, "I would much rather ride up the hills than down."

Brigham Young had not heard of our condition when we arrived in Emigration Canyon. In Salt Lake they were holding a large assembly of some kind when word was brought to President Young of the plight of the 'Willie Handcart Company," starving and freezing in the snow. President Young at once called for volunteers with teams to go to their aid with food, bedding, clothing, and etc. This act of kindness saved many lives. The pioneers were very thankful.

In the family group there were Father, Mother, Sarah, William, Mary Ann 15, Joseph 11, James Heber 8, Charlotte 5, Sophia Elizabeth 3, and the new baby. We arrived in Salt Lake November 9th, 1856. Charles, the baby that was born on the English Channel, was carried on a pillow across the plains. He was a mere skeleton. People came from all around to see him and give him warm clothing.

President Brigham Young was inspired to send help to the company when they reached Emigration Canyon east of Salt Lake City. Teams with food, clothing, and bedding were sent that saved their lives. They rejoiced to have the privilege to eat bread and to find much needed rest. I consider our whole journey faith promoting. The family settled in Provo for several years before coming to Heber. Two more children were born in America, John and George. Our brother, Heber, had several fingers frozen to the first knuckle. They were sawed off when he reached Salt Lake City. The Moultons moved from Provo to Heber in 1860 and lived in a two room log cabin.

Now for a little of my own life. I was married to Addison Hicken on the 23d of December 1873 in the Endowment House, Salt Lake City. Our home was two log rooms with a lean-to. In later years it was replaced by the frame house that Errol, the youngest son, now occupies. When my first daughter, Rhoda, was born, I came near going to the other side, but by faith and power of the Priesthood, I was healed. It was nothing else for we had no doctor at that time in Heber. My second daughter, Katherine, was born in Arizona while we lived in the United Order, called there as missionaries to help build up the country. The same condition--no doctor or midwife. I got along just fine, because the Lord knew our condition and blessed us because we trusted Him. When Malinda came, the same experience again, but through prayers and faith I was healed.

When our first child was 18 months old, we were

called to go on a mission for the Church with others to settle a portion of Arizona. On the 14th day of February 1876, we left Heber. The snow was to the top of fences. Some of them were completely covered. We had two yoke of oxen and a cow and an ox yoked together. That made us three yoke and a trail wagon. The first wagon was loaded with things we had to take. The back one was where we rode and slept. Many times when I have seen the road bed in head of us, I, with the baby, would slip out of the wagon without letting Dad know. He would not let us out unless he thought it was dangerous. It took close watching to drive the oxen. Sometimes the roads were so muddy you could hardly tell we were moving. When we were crossing the divide the snow was four and five feet deep. The rest of the teams in the company were horses. They could not pull through the snow, so Pa had to take his oxen and leave me and baby at the foot of the mountain until way into the night. Maybe you think I wasn't afraid--brush and snow and nothing but wolves howling--until one of the men brought back one of the oxen hurt and groaning. I felt sorry for him. He died. Pa came back and we got over all right. We bought another yoke of oxen at the settlement. We were ferried over the big Colorado River. The oxen swam through it. Now in short time we reached sand on the road. It filled the spokes of the wheels as if going through snow. After we reached the little Colorado, we camped and turned out the teams to feed. They would make for the river for a drink and get fast in quick sand, and here's where the oxen came in again to help pull the horses out.

When we left Salt Lake, some of the men thought we were foolish to go with oxen and made the remark we never would get there. Those driving horses frequently stopped to joke saying, "So long, Add, we will see you in Arizona." Dad always replied, "Run along. Don't worry. We will beat you all there." So he did. The horses sank in the sand and stayed until Dad reached them, unyoked his own oxen and yoked them on and pulled them out, making his promise come true. They were thankful we had oxen. We brought them back to Heber when we were released.

In the little town of Sunset there were 136 missionaries who lived in "United Order" under Captain Lot Smith, the man who burned Johnson's army wagons when they were entering the Salt Lake Valley.

They built a fort for protection from the many Indians. Houses were created in it. They had a large dining table and a kitchen and a place to do their baking. They ate at the same table, did their work together, and were happy as one big family. The men had to work hard to build dams and ditches to bring water to the land. The dams were made of brush, rock, and dirt, and would wash out 7 or 8 times during the summer. There is much I could tell, but this is enough on this subject.

(While Elizabeth was living in the United Order she was preparing the meal and her baby Katherine was on a small bed in the bedroom. She went in to see if she was all right, and found a large snake coiled up on her feet. There were no men around, only a deaf and dumb boy, who killed it.)

When released, we came back to Heber and lived on the Moulton ranch until my brother William died. Dad used to haul milk and butter and beef to the mines in Park City, a prosperous business, milking 50 cows. He moved back to Heber, farmed, went into the cattle business and went into the beef market with my younger brother John.

(Each morning after her mother died, Elizabeth's father

walked the six blocks to the Hicken home. She would have a nice small batter pudding baked for him. He would eat it with butter and sugar and say, "Thanks, Lizzie. That was so good--just hit the spot." Then back he would trudge home to his son John's with whom he was living.)

I was president of the West Ward Primary for several years, counselor to Sister Joannah E. Jensen in the West Ward Relief Society, and also Stake Relief Society. Also President of the West Ward Relief Society for some time and ward district teacher.

(Family records indicate that she apparently served at least 13 years in the Stake and Ward Relief Society.)

I have washed and laid out, helped make clothes and dressed dead many times. I often wish I had numbered them. In most cases I had help. I have seen the sick healed many times. One incident--a most miraculous one --was that of John F. Ohlwiler, my son-in-law, who had a large frozen piece of dirt strike him on the back, breaking it. The doctors were sent for. Both said he could not live. One brother said to me, "Well, John is done for." I remarked, "Who said so?" He said, "The doctors." I replied, "They don't know everything." I felt he could be saved by prayer and faith in the Lord and power of the Priesthood, and he was, and lived to be the father of five children.

(One reason for the faith Elizabeth had when John Ohlwiler was hurt was that Patriarch Thomas Hicken had blessed him, saying, "You are a very sick man, but you will live.")

One daughter has filled a mission for the Church, and one son at the present time is on the Islands of the Sea. All these things have been faith promoting in my life, and many things I have read and heard related, such as instances where they supposed the two Nephites came in a home where a sick child was and administered to it and it was made well.

Elizabeth's language was never vulgar, but gentle always. And she had a great influence for good over her family and associates, living in such a way that no evil could be spoken of her. She improved herself constantly by reading a chapter from Church books each evening before going to bed.

Her son Elijah, "Lige," said that during her later life his mother went through three sessions a day at the Temple. He chided her about over-doing, but she said she didn't have much time and when she went down, it would be permanently.

Addison and Elizabeth spent their last days in Salt Lake City to be near the temple. Addison died of a stroke at Salt Lake December 7, 1924. Elizabeth died there March 7, 1933 after suffering with liver trouble. Both are buried in the Heber City Cemetery.

taken from a biography written by daughter Katie Hicken Duke, a letter written by Elizabeth Hicken to a grandaughter, Verda Hicken, and a biography in "Heber Biographies," How Beautiful Upon the Mountains, p. 389 (complied by the Wasatch County Daughters of the Utah Pioneers). printed 1973.